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unimportant words in the original. This small fragment will serve as the starting-point for important investigations, especially for comparative study of the syntax and stilistics of the two languages.

The second selection of 124 lines consists of two fits or cantos and presupposes a description of the murder of Abel by his brother. The first fit narrates in a highly dramatic form Cain's return to his dwelling, his arraignment by God, his confession and fear of being slain by the way, God's establishing a peace with him on earth accompanied by his curse. In the second fit follows the description of the grief of Adam and Eve at Abel's death and the crime of Cain. The parents are troubled at the thought that they have no longer a son. Then Seth is born to them as a token of God's favor. Recurring to Cain the poet relates that he had strong descendants, evil and loving strife. With these Seth's descendents are united in marriage with the result that all become hateful to God. One alone, Enoch, was good and wise, whom therefore God took from the sinful world. Then follows the mediæval myth of the second coming of Enoch and his slaying by Antichrist, who in turn is put to death by an angel of God, and of the establishment of God's kingdom on earth.

The third selection of 187 lines contains the story of the destruction of Sodom and is divided into two cantos. The first relates of the reception of the angels by Abraham at Mamre, and of his entreating and haggling with God to spare Sodom. The second fit describes the wickedness of Sodom and the reception of the angels by Lot, who is warned to flee. Then follows a vivid portrayal of the destruction of the city and the incident closes with the turning of Lot's wife to stone upon a mountain "where she shall stand as a sign to men as long as the earth lives."

The first fit and the beginning of the second of ii and the end of the second fit of iii can be compared in their lofty beauty and dramatic power to the Fall of the Angels, and the speech of Satan in the Ags. fragment and the Genesis, so far as it is preserved in the original dialect and in translation, may be said to represent the very summit of poetic production

of a Christian character in the first period of the Germanic literatures.⁷

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FRENCH GRAMMAR.

A Reading French Grammar. A short method of learning to read the French language, by EDWARD H. MAGILL. 8vo, 146+14 pp. Philadelphia: Christopher Sower Co.

Modern French Series, annotated for schools and colleges with biographical sketches of the authors, by EDWARD H. MAGILL; Philadelphia: Christopher Sower Co. I. 'Le Piano de Jeanne' and 'Qui perd gagne' by FRANCISQUE SARCEY, 194 pp.; II. 'Sur la Pente' by MME DE WITT (née Guizot), 196 pp.; III. 'La Fille de Clémentine,' ou 'Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard' by ANATOLE FRANCE, 209 pp.

In the preface to his grammar, Prof. Magill writes:

"The object aimed at by most English-speaking people in studying the French language is believed to be the mental training which such study supplies and the ability to read readily the valuable scientific works in that language, together with an early introduction to the treasures of its literature."

⁷ I add the following notes to Braune's text: 12 *mi* Note, *mn* is certain; I think I see a stroke above the letters, in which case this is an abbreviation (unknown to me). 14 after *uuesan* an interrogation-mark in the Ms. There are similar cases in the Ohg. Isidor (e.g. xxxi 13), where an interrogative clause is distinctly separated by the punctuation and capitalisation from a following modifying clause, and this usage of the Mss. which illustrates the passing of the language from parataxis to hypotaxis should be recognized in the text. 29 *en am*, I read *enum* with *u* blurred or possibly corrected out of *o*; if this letter were *a*, it would be open *a* which the scribe does not use. 54 and 61 *thinum*, I read in both cases *thinun* (cf. the sunl. 71). Braune states in his note to the latter case that the third stroke of an *m* has been run together with the following *f*, but I can see no difference between this *f* and that in *forð* just preceding. 56 Braune corrects *garoo* into *garo*, but cf. *garoo* C 620 *garao* C 206 Ohg. *garowo*, Ags. *gearuwe*. 66 *tianono*, I read *tiunono*, cf. the *u* in *thu* l. 44 and the note to *enum* above. 89 *iac*, Note, cf. the long *i* in *ina* 134 lk 207 im 280. 126 *gesidi*, the *d* is stroked, but later and with a finer pen. 148 *folc* not *folk*. Also it seems to me that in ll. 153, 203, 282 and 318 the punctuation of the Ms. is to be preferred to Braune's.

This is the object of the series now to claim our notice. The leading grammatical rules are studied in what is doubtless the most natural way, that is, the verb is learned first and then the other parts of speech; the tendency of Modern Language teaching is in this direction, for most instructors now recognize the uselessness of studying the rules for articles, adjectives, pronouns and what not, before learning anything of the most important element in language—the verb. Prof. Grandgent's new French Grammar follows this plan, and so, it seems to me, should all our modern language grammars. Whether the irregular verbs should be taught at the very start is a different question; in fact, instructors do not seem to "teach" irregular verbs as much as they did formerly; they rely more on the student learning and becoming familiar with them as he meets them in the course of his reading, when no irregular formation should be passed over until the student has thoroughly understood its peculiarities. After the verbs have been studied, the other parts of speech should follow in rapid succession, so that reading may be begun at a much earlier stage than was customary a few years ago. When the student has begun to read, the more elaborate and difficult syntactical rules should be studied, and they should be impressed on the student's mind by the careful translation of English into French, and, if possible (certainly at first) by the translation of exercises based on the text he has just been reading.

This is the plan followed by the author in the grammar under discussion; but no exercises for translating into French are given for the reason that "it seems to the author best that a student should, by reading, first learn how *others* write French before attempting to do it for himself." This view will probably not be accepted by all teachers, and it does seem that a few good sentences, to be rendered into French, could do no harm, but might, on the contrary, fix the rules in the learner's memory. Prof. Magill does say that "written exercises in French are of great value and really indispensable, but they properly come later, after acquiring a considerable familiarity with the printed page,"

and it might therefore be well for him to furnish us with such exercises, based on the texts which follow in his series; these would, at any rate, be useful before attempting some standard Composition work. I should say that, with the exception of a few details to be mentioned later, the author's plan is excellent, and will be welcomed by every progressive modern language teacher; I should however like to see a few sentences for translation under each rule, and also a collection of exercises to be rendered into French when the student reaches the second or syntactical part of the grammar.

In examining this grammar more in detail, I will call attention to parts which might be changed or, in the opinion of the reviewer, improved; some changes may be a matter of mere opinion, while others should doubtless be made, if the work is to be made more acceptable. Some mistakes may be here overlooked which should be corrected, and I plead, in advance, lack of time for a more thorough review than is here presented.

Rules on French pronunciation are, I feel sure, necessary, or otherwise the teacher himself will have to give his students a tabular view of the same; these rules might be presented in a tabulated form not occupying more than a few pages; all statement on the subject is entirely omitted by Prof. Magill.

Page 12, rule i: Instead of "for the *present conditional*, add *s* to the future," say: "add *ais* to final *r* of the *present infinitive*."—Page 14, rule iii: The wording of the rule should be altered so as not to confuse the beginner; the teacher himself will probably have to read it twice before he can fully grasp the idea.—Page 17, last line: After "adjective," add "the partitive articles *du, de la* and *des* all become *de*," since *du, de la, des* meaning "of the" do not become *de*.—Page 18, iv: Strike out the sentence "Many nouns ending in *e* are feminine"; the statement would seem entirely too vague.—Page 19, vi: I think that the comparison of *petit* — *moindre, le moindre*, should be bracketed, and the student told that *plus petit, le plus petit* are used more frequently.—Page 21, ii: Why is *quatre-vingtième* mentioned in this rule?—Page 23, last line: Change the wording, "*en* and *y* sometimes

refer to persons," since *en* very often refers to persons, whereas *y* rarely does.—Page 27, v: The wording is not so clear as it would seem desirable.—Page 29, vii: There is no mention here of *dont*, which is however a very frequent form; it is explained on page 77, 4, but it should also be mentioned here.—Page 32: The first note is not entirely clear at the first reading.

Pages 34-37: It seems to me that the verbs *avoir* and *être* should be treated in the beginning of the grammar, immediately after the regular verbs, rather than be put off until the pronouns have been treated. The latter order of presenting the material would seem somewhat inconsistent with the idea of the whole series.—Page 48, 5: Read "Verbs ending in *-aître* in the present infinitive circumflex the *i* whenever it precedes a *t*; as, *plaire*."—Page 51, 2: This rule should come under the first rule, page 50.—Page 52 (b): Change in both cases *Ecosse* to *Ecossais*.—Page 54, vi: The expression: "This construction is very common" might be made much stronger.—Page 59, iv, 2, last example: *de* should be explained as following a verb of feeling or emotion, and used where *par* might have been expected. Page 64, vi: *cruel* does not necessarily mean "tiresome" when it precedes the noun, nor does *gros* always mean "swollen," and *honnête*, "polite, polished," when following the noun.—Page 65, 66: The adjectives requiring *de* are not differentiated from those requiring *à*.—Page 66: "he is interested in news" should hardly be translated *il est curieux de nouvelles*; *je suis fâché de vous* does not mean "I am sorry for you."—Page 67: *il est voisin de sa ruine* is not a good translation for "he is near his ruin."—Page 68: *il est indulgent pour sa famille* can hardly be considered very good French.—Page 68: Much more importance should be given to the rule contained in the note at the bottom of this page, especially to the sentence "Nominative forms of the personal pronouns can be separated from their verbs only by the negative *ne* and direct or indirect pronominal objects."—Page 69: The rules on this page are somewhat confusing; they could be made clearer.—Page 71: *en vain travaille-t-il s'avancer* ("in vain he strives to advance") is not good French.—Page 72: The

y in the following sentence does not represent the usual construction: *penserez-vous à moi? j'y penserai*.—Page 73, 2, note: It is hardly correct to translate *mon meilleur ami* as "my better friend;" at least, such a rendering might puzzle the student later, even though the translation "my best friend" be given.—Page 76: The following sentences do not sound well; *ce n'est que faire son devoir que de rester là*, "it is only doing his duty to remain there," and *qu'est-ce ci, Fabian?* "what is this, Fabian? They may not be wrong, but they might be avoided in a beginner's grammar. And, in the latter sentence, is *ceci* divided? Would not the full form be *qu'est-ce ceci?* the old *ci* being used alone to avoid the repetition of *ce*?—Page 77, 3: The use of *qui* in *ils passèrent la rivière qui à la nage, qui en bateaux* is not of frequent enough usage to warrant its insertion in a short grammar.—Page 78, iii: *que* in *qu'on vous hait en tous lieux* ("when they hate you everywhere") does not mean "when" unless some sentence precedes in which *lorsque* or *quand* has been used.—Page 81: "it happens to every one to fail" should not be translated *il arrive à tout le monde de faillir*, but *de faire faillite* (or *d'échouer*). Nor does the preterit in *il nous semble que vous arrivâtes samedi* sound very well.—Page 83: *ce sont des Allemagnes* should be *ce sont des Allemands*.—Page 83, viii, 3: It should be expressly stated that *de* is used only after the present and imperfect indicative of *venir*.—Page 84, ix: *cela c'est trouvé véritable* for "that was found true" sounds badly; so does *il balance entre aller et rester*, "he wavers between going and staying," on page 85, x, and also on page 91, 4, (e).—Page 85, xi: It is reasonably doubtful whether the first two participles in the following example should be treated as adjectives: *les bœufs mugissants et les brebis bêlantes venaient en foule, quittant les gras pâturages*.—Page 88: *il vaut beaucoup mieux d'étudier que d'être ignorant* is not good.—Page 89: "we happened to see them" would not be translated *nous sommes venus à les voir*; *alemagne* is a mistake in *nous apprenons à écrire l'Allemagne*, and the following two sentences sound badly: *je m'attends à venir*, "I expect to come," and especially *je m'attends qu'il viendra*, "I expect him to

come."—Page 90: *il a nié d'avoir dit cela*, "he denied having said that" and *il a failli à me tuer*, "he came near killing me" are incorrect; the first note at the bottom of this page should therefore be changed.—Page 91, 4, (a): *il est venu pour voir sa sœur* does not mean "he came to see his sister" but rather "he came in order to (so that he might) see his sister;" a beginner might easily be confused by this example.—Page 93: *ils en ont changé une fois encore* is a poor translation of "they have changed it (their name) once more."—Page 94, xvii: The comma should be omitted in *non, que je sache*, "not that I know of"; if the negative is to be emphasized, the French would be *non, pas que je sache*.—Page 95 last example: The preterit sounds very badly in *j'ai dit que je l'eus fait*, "I said that I did it."—Page 97: *je resterai ici au cas qu'il vienne* is a poor translation of "I will remain here in case he comes." It would be better not to repeat *soit* in *soit qu'il ait raison ou soit qu'il ait tort*, or *ou* should be omitted; as the example stands, it is unusual, though not actually wrong. *Vous ferez bien cela sans que j'y aille* hardly conveys the idea contained in "you will do that very well without my going there."—Page 103, note 1: *les barbares n'osent approcher du saint* is wrong; it should be *les barbares n'osent s'approcher du saint*.—Page 105, 3: It would be better not to use *disconvenir*, as it is not the usual expression for "to deny;" we find it in *je ne disconviens pas qu'il n'ait fait cela*, "I do not deny that he has done that," and also on page 106, first example.—Page 106, 4: *il n'en fera rien* is not the exact translation of "he will do nothing about it." It might also be well to change the following sentence, as it does not sound well: *elle ne lui parle jamais qu'il ne soit nécessaire*, "she never speaks to him unless it be necessary."—Page 106, i, note: read *allemand* for *allemande*.—Page 107: Correct *quel temps* in *quel temps avez-vous demeuré en Angleterre?* "how long have you lived in England?" and *ce sont* in *en Amérique ce sont des bisons qui ont une bosse sur le dos*, "in America there are buffaloes which have a hump on the back." In the following two examples of *en* and *dans*, it would be better to change their places: *le prince*

demeure un moment dans le silence, "the prince remains a moment in silence," and *il n'a pas de boutique; il travaille en chambre*, "he has no shop; he works in his room."—Page 108: Correct *vous serez de sa vue affranchi dans dix jours*, "you will be freed from the sight of him at the expiration of ten days," and *il a plus de hauteur de quarante pieds*, "it is forty feet higher." Add an *e* to *encor* in *et mon esprit troublé le voit encor la nuit*, as the student would not probably realize that this sentence represents a verse of twelve syllables.—Page 110: *Change éloigné* to *loin* in *il est bien éloigné de croire que cela soit permis*. Also, *je crois* might be better than *je pense* in *je pense qu'il ne faut pas s'engager dans cette entreprise* and *je pense qu'il peut arriver aujourd'hui*; the correct translation of the former sentence is, "I think that we (you, they, etc.) must (should) not engage in that enterprise;" the French rendering of the English as given by the author ("I think it is not necessary to engage in that enterprise") would rather be *je ne crois pas que ce soit nécessaire de s'engager dans cette entreprise*.

I shall not enter into any criticism of the idioms on page 114-139: the author writes: "The limits of the grammar necessarily prevent this from being a complete collection, even of common idioms," and yet idioms are inserted which are rare, to the exclusion of others which are much more common; in other respects, this sort of a grammar will prove very useful to the beginner. In the foregoing remarks, I have noted the examples rather minutely, because they are of such prime importance in any work constructed on the plan of Prof. Magill's grammar. Three excellent texts accompany this grammar, the second being perhaps the easiest of the three, and I have been informed that two others are to follow: IV. JULES CLARETIE; V. MME BLANC ("Théodore Bentzon"). The plan carried out in this series has already been discussed; in the preface to Vol. i, Prof. Magill says:

"These volumes are intended especially for practice in *rapid reading*, in translation first, and, in the later stages of the course, in the original, without either oral or mental translation, so far as is possible. This is believed by the Editor to be by far the best practice

method of becoming familiar with the modern languages under the conditions now presented by the crowded *curricula* of our schools and colleges. But it should never be forgotten that intelligent and fluent translation, or understanding the text without translation, is the great object of this study, and that it is not a wise expenditure of time to attempt to impart a writing and speaking knowledge of French in school and college."

In Vol. iii, the editor writes :

"Whatever attention is to be given to the study of foreign languages, even while pursuing these, our own English tongue must ever be made of a primary importance. To this end there can be no better training than daily practice in the translation into English of the best specimens of ancient and modern literature."

Every instructor will agree with this opinion, for, after all, one of the most important objects (I cannot say the most important) of modern language study is to give the student a better and more accurate knowledge of his own tongue, and the instructor should always require from the beginner the very best and neatest English rendering. The notes in the three texts are excellent, but some might have been placed at the bottom of the page, especially those explaining French constructions; I know that this is thought by some instructors to help the student unduly, and yet I think that the average teacher can tell whether the student has thoroughly prepared his lesson beforehand, or is making use of notes (either of his own making or furnished by the editor) during the recitation.

In conclusion, I would repeat that the plan of this series is an admirable one for the majority of our colleges; Prof. Magill's grammar follows conscientiously this plan, and the texts he has prepared will prove excellent reading for beginners, excellent because interesting and written in perfectly pure French.

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ENGLISH LITERATURE.

Character and Opinions of William Langland as shown in 'The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman.' Thesis presented to the Faculty of the College of New Jersey for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. By EDWIN M. HOPKINS, A. M., Pro-

fessor of Rhetoric and English Language in the University of Kansas.

IN a brief introduction, Dr. Hopkins states that "the special purpose of this investigation is to give an exposition of him whose work preëminently, as compared with that of other writers of the fourteenth century, reflects the opinions of the common people."

Beginning with the scene of the poem, the discussion advances to the date of Langland's coming to London. Here personal impressions take the place of actual proofs, on the writer's admission that the determination of this question "must be largely speculative." Generally, however, Dr. Hopkins fortifies his statements by quotations from *passus* and *verse*, wisely confining his proof of each point to a single appropriate reference. This method gives a desirable definiteness and perspicuity to the consideration of the Content of the Poem, divided under the four heads of Scientific Information, Political and Social Theories, Theological and Religious Teaching, and Langland's Philosophy. The third of these chapters is again sub-divided into three sections:—The Supernal and Infernal; Man; Duties and Transgressions; Doctrines of Holy Church—and constitutes, perhaps, the most valuable portion of the work. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the analytic process has "the defect of its qualities," and that in the consideration of so many and important details the poem as a whole is disregarded. This defect is less noticeable in the concluding chapters on the Form, Spirit, and Value of the Poem; but even in these the parts are not exhibited in their true relation to the whole. Were it not for the preliminary announcement, we should naturally infer that the writer's purpose was to extract plums from this remarkably heterogeneous pudding, and to arrange them systematically on a drying board; we should then have little but praise to offer. There are few more fallacious axioms than that a whole is equal to the sum of its parts; and no amount of scholarly care can ever prove "the character and teaching" of a man or his writing by a compilation of his opinions or an accumulation of quotations. There must be a recognition of the mental attrition by which opposing